



Sisters of St. Joseph U.S. Federation Event 2016
<http://www.cssjfed.org/>
JUSTICE ACTION – TALKING POINTS
WHY WE STAND WITH CIW, SUPPORT FAIR FOOD



INTRODUCTION:

- Large volume purchasing at lowest possible prices by corporate food industry giants has a history of creating downward pressure on wages and working conditions in the agricultural industry. Conditions can be as extreme as human rights violations, violence, human trafficking and slavery.
- The Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) has helped to change intolerable working conditions through anti-trafficking efforts and the creation of a Fair Food Program.
- The Fair Food Program is a partnership among farmworkers, growers and food companies that has won widespread recognition for ending long-standing abuses that have plagued agriculture for generations.

BACKGROUND:

- Agricultural Workers - Southwest Florida is the state's largest region for agricultural production. The largest farmworker community is in Immokalee. Most of the 5000 community members work for large agricultural corporations, harvesting tomatoes, citrus and other crops. The community is made up mostly of Latino, Mayan Indians, and Haitian immigrants working for low wages.
- True Stories of Abuse – Farmworkers have been forced to work 12 hour days, 6 days a week, for \$20. Armed guards assault workers who try to escape. Homeless US citizens recruited from shelters with promises of housing and jobs found themselves in labor camps with rent and food deducted from their pay, leaving them perpetually indebted. Guest workers from Haiti were forced to work as employers held passports and visas. Since 1997, Federal officials have successfully prosecuted nine slavery operations in Florida involving over 1200 workers.
- Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) – CIW is a worker-based human rights organization internationally recognized for achievements in social responsibility, anti-human trafficking and gender-based violence at work. CIW helped to pioneer anti-human trafficking efforts in the US and helped create the Alliance for Fair Food and its Fair Food Program. The Fair Food Program has been called "the best workplace monitoring program in the US" by the NY Times.
- Fair Food Program - A unique partnership between growers, farmworkers, and retail food companies to ensure humane wages and working conditions for those who pick fruits and vegetables on participating farms. The program is funded by an extra penny per pound of harvested food. Funds help provide shade and rest breaks, fair wages, and zero tolerance of sexual harassment and slavery. The Fair Food label indicates that food products were sourced under just conditions.

WHY THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH FEDERATION SUPPORTS CIW AND THE FAIR FOOD PROGRAM

- Sisters of St. Joseph from around the globe gather every five years at a U.S. Federation Event. Federation Events explore how Sisters of St. Joseph may act as one. Events include opportunities to take action on social justice issues. The next event is July 9-12, 2016 in Orlando, FL.
- The 2016 Event will include an Action for Justice Day on Tuesday, July 12. The focus of the Action for Justice Day is awareness and advocacy of labor trafficking and the exploitation of farmworkers. It will conclude with a call to action to urge the Wendy's restaurant chain to join the Fair Food Program.
- Sisters of St. Joseph are longtime advocates to stop human trafficking and modern day slavery. The 2011 Federation Event in St. Louis, MO focused on sexual exploitation and trafficking in the travel and tourism industry. The 2011

Event influenced the Millennium Hotel in St. Louis to sign the ECPAT Code of Conduct. The Code establishes policies and procedures in the travel and tourism industry against the sexual exploitation of children and trains employees about prevention and reporting.

- Catholic Social Teaching states that every human being is created in the image of God and redeemed by Jesus Christ, and therefore is invaluable and worthy of respect as a member of the human family. Every person, from the moment of conception to natural death, has inherent dignity from God and a right to life consistent with that dignity. This teaching is accompanied by a love of the poor, who are often vulnerable to abuses like human trafficking and slavery.
- CIW Success Stories - CIW has successfully bargained with corporations to protect workers by signing on to the Fair Food Program. Participating Fair Food corporations include Taco Bell, McDonald's, Subway, Burger King, Chipotle, Whole Foods, Sodexo, Aramark, Compass Group, Walmart, the Florida Tomato Growers Association and more.
- Despite the success of the CIW and Fair Food Program, many companies do not participate and continue the cycle of unjust treatment of agricultural workers. Wendy's, and most of the supermarket industry (only Trader Joe's and Whole Foods participate today), have yet to join the Fair Food Program.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, VISIT:



Coalition of Immokalee Workers at <http://www.ciw-online.org/>



The Alliance for Fair Food at <http://www.allianceforfairfood.org/>
The Alliance for Fair Food is a national network of people working in partnership with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers for farmworker justice.



The Fair Food Program at <http://www.fairfoodprogram.org/>
The Fair Food Program is a human rights program that is designed, monitored, and enforced by the very workers whose rights it is intended to protect.



The Student/Farmworker Alliance at <http://www.sfalliance.org/>
We are a national network of students and young people organizing with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers to uproot exploitation in the fields and build a food system based on justice, respect and dignity for farmworkers.